



City Council Committee Meeting Agenda

Parks and Trails Advisory Committee

This meeting will be conducted in person at Stanwood City Hall with an option for participants to join by telephone or online as well.

Connection information will be posted on the City Website

<https://www.stanwoodwa.org>

Monday, June 17, 2024, 3:00 PM

1. Call to Order & Roll Call
2. Citizen Comments
3. Approval of May 2024 Meeting Minutes
4. Church Creek Park Trail Design/Management
5. Park/Trail Updates
 - Heritage Park – project status, grant status
 - Stanwood Port Susan Trail – project status
6. Committee Member Comments

Zoom Information:

Parks and Trails Advisory Committee

Please click this URL to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85751722998?pwd=T25lVXpSMnFXZDZGZEpHQVY6eStSdz09>

Webinar ID: 857 5172 2998

Passcode: 304123

Telephone: (253) 215-8782

Item 4

Church Creek Park site assessment document review (see attached).

Item 5

Heritage Park – Next project bathroom upgrades. No word on grant for soccer fields/parking lot. Small grant (\$50k) to be submitted to Snohomish County for dugout fencing.

Stanwood Port Susan Trail – All permits and approvals obtained. Bid currently out, closes June 18. Construction extension given until January 20, 2025 from RCO.

Introduction

Church Creek is an established park located east of downtown Stanwood within the Uptown Center District neighborhood. It is comprised of numerous open spaces, including a large lawn used for gatherings and movie nights, a children's play area oriented toward the youngest demographic, a parking lot, a baseball field, basketball court, picnic shelter, disc golf course, a mix of tall trees, two Class III wetlands, one Class IV wetland and a reach of Church Creek that runs along the eastern edge of the site. Church Creek Estates, an existing single family residential development, borders the park to the north. Stanwood High School is located to the west of 72nd Ave. NW. To the south is the site of the future Cedarside Commons, a mixed-use development with 514 housing units. Along the eastern property line is an additional site of potential future development.

Environmental Documentation

Church Creek

Church Creek is classified as a Type F fish-bearing stream in a critical areas study commissioned by the City of Stanwood in March 2023. The presence of steelhead trout, cutthroat trout, chum salmon, and the spawning activity of coho salmon has been recorded. The presence of bull trout is presumed, and the reach gradient is accessible to pink and chinook salmon.

This reach of the creek is typified by a shallow streambed with a long gravel bar running along the west bank. The creek runs swiftly during the rainy season and fills the channel from bank to bank. A mix of western red cedar, big leaf maple, and vine maple grows along the banks of Church Creek.

A log jam exists to the south end of the creek. The location of the log jam appears to be off park property. There has been beaver activity observed on Church Creek, however, it is unclear if the log jam was created by beaver or by debris collecting in snags during high water periods. Guests of the park visit the creek and have constructed rope swings that overhang the channel. The Parks Department routinely removes the swings.

Wetlands

Wetland C is a category III wetland located in the developed area of the park, however, it is not a part of the study area.

Wetland D is a flat depressional wetland with no outlet for surface water. It is characterized by persistent, ungrazed plants in half the area with saturated soils and seasonal ponding in more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the wetland. Wetland D has a depth of water storage in the range of 6" to less than 24". Special habitat features include downed woody debris within the wetland that are greater than 4" in diameter and 6' long. Nearby priority habitats include snags and logs, the riparian zone of Church Creek, and instream condition. Wetland D is listed as a category III wetland with a 125' buffer. The Disc Golf Course crosses Wetland D in several locations with pathways installed by disc golf users. The crossings are marked by logs from downed trees and in some places raised with woodchips or made from wood pallets.

Wetland E is a sloped wetland. It is documented as a wetland discharge located near to Church Creek and upstream from an area that is known to flood. The wetland has saturated soils and is listed as a Cowardin forested plant class. It has the potential to support habitat though its habitat valuation (Category) is reduced by the current land use intensity. Nearby

priority habitats include snags and logs, the riparian zone of Church Creek, and instream condition. Wetland E is listed as a category IV wetland with a 50' buffer.

Site Observations

On May 14, 2024 HBB staff Dean W. Koonts and Nicole Price along with City of Stanwood staff Tansy Schroeder, Carly Ruacho, Nicole Strachilla, and Kevin Pellham, along with Disc Course Volunteer Kevin Clark and former PTAC Member Cathy Wooten gathered in the Church Creek Park parking lot. PTAC Member Peter Kamb joined us later. The weather was sunny with a high temperature of 67°F and little to no wind. The group came together for the purpose of walking the site, observing existing conditions, and discussing topics such as individual use patterns, existing conditions, the user experience, volunteer activities, rogue construction, the condition of the wetland, the flow of water across the site, maintenance challenges, opportunities to improve accessibility, and how weather impacts the experience of the park.

The group accessed the Church Creek Trail from the edge of the ADA parking stalls, traveled to the animal-proof trash bin, then continued on the woodchip path. The path leads to the edge of the Church Creek ravine and down to the Church Creek gravel bar where the group turned north then followed a packed earth path back up the bank. Turning north the group crossed a wood bridge, then followed the fence line back to the baseball field and north pedestrian entry point. Then progressing to Disc Golf holes 11, 12, and 13. The group traveled along the edge of the outfield back to the shelter and parking lot where they disbanded.

Park Boundaries

The park boundaries are clearly defined along the edge of Church Creek Estates marked by a chain-link fence line and punctuated by an entry point at the north corner of the baseball, outfield. 72nd Ave NW marks the western edge of the park property. There is an existing driveway entrance to the parking lot. A study is currently underway to create improved pedestrian access to the park at the NW corner of the park. The property line bordering the Cedarside Commons is identified by a change from forested landscape to grassy field. A wooden, spit-rail fence line with an opening located just south of the parking lot indicates a pedestrian connection between the properties. The southern property line is not as easily identified moving east from the split rail fence. A site survey or surveyed demarcation is necessary to properly identify the south property lines as portions of the disc golf course and the existing paths seem to overlap the south property line.

Park Entry Points

The driveway to the parking lot is the primary access point for Church Creek Park. Two pedestrian entry points exist. One is on the north property line near the outfield of the baseball field. The second is on the south property line near the parking lot. Parking stalls line the drive aisle with a large open lawn to the north. The drive aisle leads to ADA stalls and ends in a cul-de-sac near the constructed features in the park. An asphalt path leads from the cul-de-sac to the picnic structure, baseball field, basketball court, and play structure. The Cedarside Commons development plans are currently proposing a paved pathway that runs along the wetland boundary ending at the south property line of Church Creek Park at a point that aligns with the Wetland D buffer line. A second proposed pedestrian connection to the park is under development in the northeast corner of the park that will provide connectivity to the street sidewalk system to Stanwood High School and to Church Creek Estates.

Site Walk and Analysis

Park Zones

The park has 5 identifiable zones. The attached plan, on page 5, identifies the location of each of the zones.

Zone 1, the Developed Park, includes the parking lot, lawn, children's play area, baseball field, basketball court, and picnic shelter.

Zone 2, the Forest Glade, is a predominantly Douglas fir forest with an open understory located to the south of the parking lot and picnic shelter.

Zone 3, the Ravine, is in the eastern portion of the site to either side of Church Creek and features steeper slopes with a mixed forest landscape comprised of western red cedar, Douglas fir, bigleaf maple and a mix of understory shrubs.

Zone 4, the Alder Glen, is located near the north property line bound by the ravine to the east and the baseball field to the west.

Zone 5, the Central Wetland, is located at the heart of the site bordered by the Forest Glade, Ravine, Alder Glen and the Developed Park. It is typified by damp to wet soils with western red cedar and seasonal perennials.

Conditions of Existing Infrastructure

The condition of the existing infrastructure will be discussed within each of the five zones. The following sections will examine the existing topography, observed soil conditions, vegetation, indications of drainage patterns, and conditions of the existing trail and other infrastructure for all five zones. Zone 1 is not within this plan's area of study, however its layout and components impact the study area and will influence future recommendations. The two main park elements located in the plan's area of study (Zones 2 – 5) are a Disc Golf course and the informal soft-surface Church Creek Trail.

The Disc Golf Course

The Disc Golf course consists of 18 holes located in all 5 Zones. The course is beginner friendly, and all holes are par 3. The holes have shorter distances combined with slope and trees as obstacles to increase difficulty. The longest hole is 280' to 300'. Typically, tees are concrete pads and baskets are mounted on metal poles set in concrete footings. However, only tees 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 11 have concrete pads. Remaining tees are surfaced in gravel, woodchip, compacted earth, or in one case, an old stump. The baskets are placed in shallow concrete footings. The basket for hole 10 has been pulled up by vandals, and the footing was observed at approximately 1' deep.

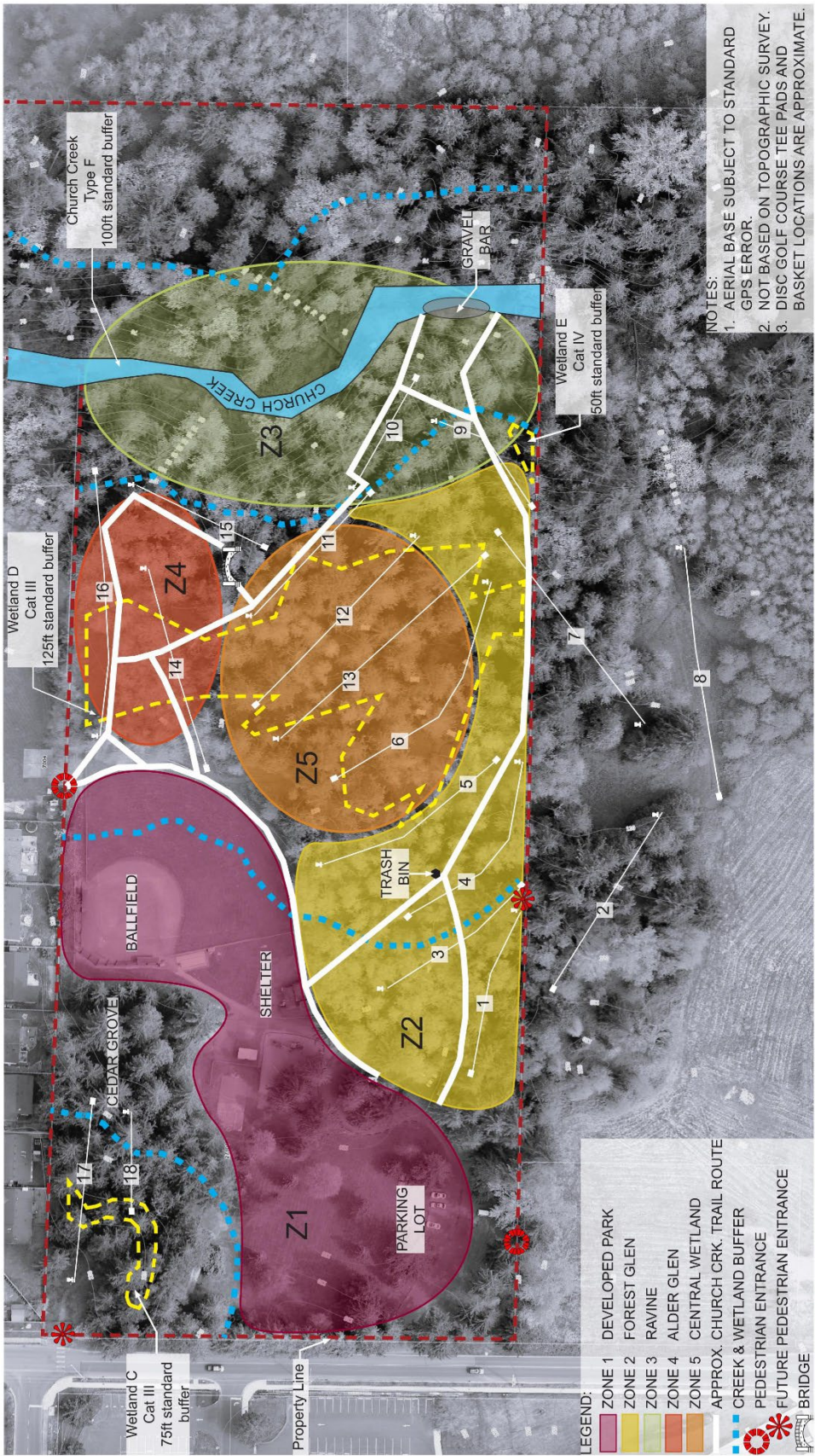
The Church Creek Park Disc Golf course is open for play year-round with the heaviest use from June to September. UDisc.com is an app providing Disc Golf course information to users. During the recent walk-through, the Disc Golf Community Representative indicated there were 126 registered visits through the app for the month of April 2024. Registered user statistics for the past 3 years, show active and steady use: 2021 had 1524 rounds played for an average of 4 per day, 2022 had 1015 rounds played for an average of 3 per day, and 2023 had 1754 rounds played for an average of 5

per day. These statistics do not include users who did not register, so the number of players and rounds played is likely to be higher.

As an indicator of its popularity, the app also shows 94 reviews and 539 ratings of the Church Creek Park Disc Golf course over the last 6 years with many of the ratings and reviews occurring in the last year. In addition, there are monthly events scheduled at Church Creek Park Disc Golf course through the app. Discgolfscore.com shows 72 registered participants with a waiting list for an additional 14, for the Church Creek Open scheduled in July 2024. The UDisc.com app users rate the condition of the course as “Fair Condition” with overgrown vegetation, and with a “swampish” character.

Church Creek Trail

The trail system consists of mulch, crushed rock, woodchip, or packed earth surfacing. The trail routes cross some of the Disc Golf holes and, in some areas, uses the hole alignments in the case of hole 10 and 11. The trail is not signed and does not have a clear entry point from the parking lot. The trail circulation route is informal. Trail route on steep slopes have slippery surfaces when wet. Runnels, erosion, and stormwater runoff often cross the trail route.



CHURCH CREEK SITE ASSESSMENT
STANWOOD TRAIL DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT PLAN



Zone 1: Developed Park

Zone 1 is not a part of the study area for this report. The observations and analysis of this zone are limited and were made to support the understanding of the plan's area of study (Zones 2 – 5).

Topography & Soils

The highest point of elevation in the park is at the northwest corner. From that forested corner the grade slopes down along 72nd Ave. NW and long the north property line. This creates a diagonal cross slope through the open lawn that flattens out as the lawn approaches the drive aisle and cul-de-sac. There is a slope near 5% from the cul-de-sac to the picnic shelter and then the site flattens out across the baseball field. The soils were not observed.

Drainage Patterns

Drainage patterns were not closely studied in this area. Sheet flow generally runs south to southeast. The parking lot drains to green in the same general direction. The cul-de-sac and ball field are pitched to the east.

Vegetation

The Developed Park contains a mix of ornamental and native plants. Established western red cedar, Douglas fir, red alder, vine maple, and bigleaf maple create a canopy around the perimeter of the Developed Park. There is also a Cedar Grove to the northwest of this zone with a mature stand of Red Cedar trees. Additional plantings include blue spruce and sycamore that provide shade over the open lawn and play area throughout portions of the day. The roundabout is planted a lace-leaf maple, fern, and young hemlock trees.

Existing Trails and Infrastructure

The largest features in the Developed Park Zone are the parking lot, cul-de-sac, play area, baseball field, and open lawn. An asphalt path connects the ADA parking and cul-de-sac to a picnic shelter. North of the picnic shelter is the play area and basketball court. To the northeast of the picnic shelter is the baseball field. All of these park features are connected by an open area with a woodchip surface. Church Creek Trail becomes a wide woodchip path at the southeast corner of the picnic shelter and heads south toward the animal proof trash bin before turning east in the Forest Glade, Zone 2. Disc Golf basket for hole 3 and tee pad for hole 4 are located south of the asphalt pathway near the picnic structure.



Zone 2: Forest Glade

Topography & Drainage Patterns

The forest glade is relatively flat with an approximate 0% to 8% slope. The western portion of this zone slopes gently to the south draining in a sheet flow toward the neighboring property. The eastern portion of the zone slopes gently eastward toward Wetland D. Wetland D can be observed to the north of the path. To the south of the path, Wetland A can be seen on the Cedarside Commons property. Wetland A has open water with a drainage that flows along the south property line into a ravine toward Church Creek. Volunteers have created a crossing over this drainage made from downed branches and wood chips to access Golf Disc holes 2 and 8. The crossing has decomposed and is blocking the drainage.

Soils & Vegetation

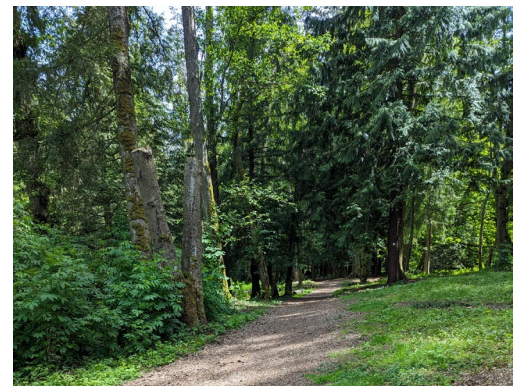
The soils in this zone are documented as a moderately well drained Pastik silt loam. In the western portion of this zone the soils are dry with a duff layer. Moving along the existing Church Creek trail the soils remain dry upland forest understory with a duff layer.

The Forest Glade consists primarily of native plants such as western red cedar, red alder, big leaf maple douglas fir, salmonberry, ferns, grasses, and forbes. In addition, there are horse chestnut seedlings and several noxious weed species present such as English ivy, English holly, herb Robert, and Himalayan blackberry.

Existing Trails and Infrastructure

Several alternate trail access points are located along the south edge of the ADA parking stalls. The open understory, with multiple overlapping trail routes, makes identifying the trail challenging. These routes merge with a main trail near an animal resistant trash bin. At this point the trail turns east along the property line and appears to cross the southern property line near Disc Golf holes 4 and 7. However, it is unclear where the south property line actually runs as it is not demarcated.

The existing Disk Golf holes 1, 2, 8 and portions of 3, 4, and 9 run through the Forest Glade. Holes 2, 7, and 8 are located on the Cedarside Commons property. A survey for the new development indicates baskets for holes 4 and 7 are on the Cedarside Commons property. Hole 9 tees off in the Forest Glade, Zone 2, at the edge of the ravine and its basket is located lower on the slope within the ravine, in Zone 3.



Zone 3: Ravine

Topography & Drainage Patterns

The ravine is typified by steep slopes ranging from 8% to 65%. Rainwater from the site drains to Church Creek. The GIS Contours indicate three drainageways. The first captures water coming from the north property line and the edge of Church Creek Estates. The second captures water from Wetland D near the Alder Glen. The third drainageway captures water from the south end of Wetland D, Wetland E and Wetland A located on the Cedarside Commons property.



Soils & Vegetation

The soils are documented as Tokul-Winston gravelly loams. They are generated by loess, volcanic ash deposits, and glacial till cemented with iron and manganese as well as glacial outwash or old alluvium mixed with loess and volcanic ash. They are moderately well drained to well drained with slow to medium run off. The soils support a variety of plant life and the slopes in the ravine are well vegetated with western red cedar, big leaf maple, salmonberry, ninebark elderberry, ferns.

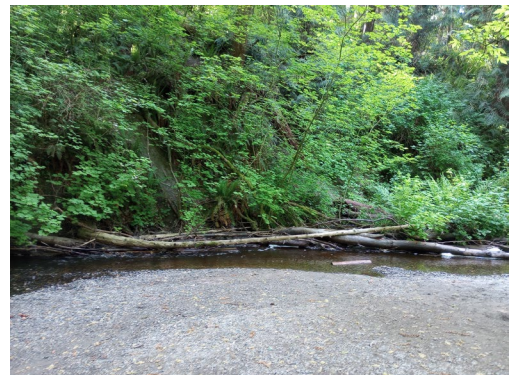


Existing Trails and Infrastructure

Just after hole 7, Church Creek Trail starts down into the ravine. To the right (south) side of the wide woodchip path is the tee for Disc Golf hole 9. It sits at the top edge of the ravine near the southern property line. In winter, this location has views of the creek. Though this area may exist directly on or adjacent to the south property line.



This portion of the path is in a natural drainage area capturing water from Wetland D, Wetland E, and Wetland A. Groundwater from a seep, possibly Wetland E, contributes moisture to the trail. Woodchips in the path absorb the water. Farther downslope, the path becomes steep and packed earth. During the rainy season it is a slip hazard. Branches have been put in muddy spots to improve traction on the trail. The path splits heading toward Church Creek or north to Disc Golf basket 9. An exposed corrugated pipe has diverted water down the path creating an eroded channel ending in a muddy spot at a dry gravel bar on the banks of the creek. North of the gravel bar there is a trail leading back up the bank to a flat space between Disc Golf basket 9 and tee pad 10. At this point the main trail becomes unclear. There are multiple packed earth paths leading to various Disc golf holes. A wood bridge with 2x4 decking and railings spans a ravine drainage between Disc Golf holes 11 and 15. The basket for Disc Golf hole 15 sits at the top edge of the ravine, adjacent to a cedar tree. This location has potential views down to Church Creek.



Zone 4: Alder Glen

Topography & Drainage Patterns

The topography in Alder Glen is relatively flat. Dry soils can be found at the highest elevation along the north property line. The Alder Glen slopes generally to the south and inward from the ball field and ravine.

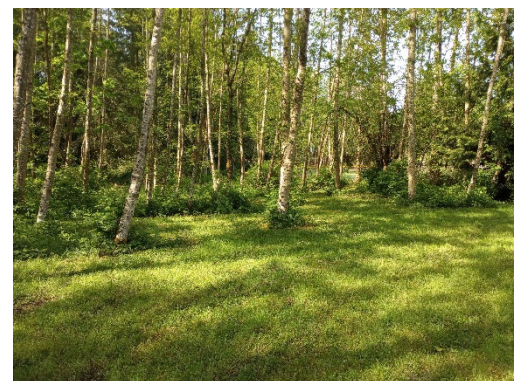
The critical areas report finds that this area drains toward the ravine. On site observations indicate that the Alder Glen slopes southward and overflows to the east during the rainy season.

Soils & Vegetation

The soils in this zone are documented as Pastik silt loam. They are found to be dry along the property line, becoming progressively more damp moving to the south. The soils within the boundary for Wetland D are identified as hydric soils. This zone is vegetated with red alder as the predominant overstory tree. Salmonberry cluster at the base of the trees. Lawn grasses with buttercup cover the non-wooded areas.

Existing Trails and Infrastructure

This zone is bordered by a chain link outfield fence to the west, a chain link fence at the edge of Church Creek Estates to the north, the ravine to the east and the central wetland to the south. Alder Glen is accessed primarily by Disc Golf players and the open grassy area is kept mown. When playing Disc Golf enthusiasts enter Alder Glen by following fairways 14 and 16. At the edge of the ravine a stamped earth path fades into grass. The only indication of a trail through the Alder Glen is the Disc Golf tee pads and baskets for holes 14 and 16.



Zone 5: Central Wetland

Topography & Drainage Patterns

The topography is flat and with slightly depressed micro-topography. When walking the site, there is no obvious drainage in this zone and it appears to be a perched wetland. The GIS contours indicate that Wetland D may slowly drain into the ravine at the southeast end of the wetland.

Soils & Vegetation

Soils in this zone are documented as Pastik silt loam, hydric soils. On the day of the site visit the soils were saturated with standing water in some areas. The predominant overstory tree is western red cedar with some red alder. Understory plants include salmonberry, sword fern, lady fern, wild ginger, and creeping buttercup.

Existing Trails and Infrastructure

The only existing infrastructure in this zone are Disc Golf holes 6, 11, 12, and 13. Tee pads and the baskets for each hole are located on dry soil outside the wetland boundaries, but within the wetland buffer. Logs have been cut and shifted to delineate walking paths and to indicate hole fairways through Wetland D boundary. A raised, narrow footpath made of wood pallets is located between holes 12 basket and hole 13 tee.



Site Assessment Findings

Overall observational findings from the site walk-through and site assessment include the following items that should be addressed:

1. Zone 2: The existing Church Creek Trail route potentially crosses the south property line and travels off park property between Disc Golf hole 4 and 9.
2. Zone 2: The potential viewpoint area that was discussed is where Disc Golf tee pad 9 is currently located. Survey documents for Cedarside Commons identify tee pad 9 as being very near and adjacent to the south property line. Given the available topography, placing a viewpoint in this location could cross the property line.
3. Zone 2 & Zone 3: The existing Church Creek Trail passes through areas with wet and saturated soils. It is possible these wet soils are Wetland E and saturated soils are seepage areas.
4. Zone 3: The top of an old, corrugated pipe to the side of the existing Church Creek Trail has become exposed. It now diverts and concentrates surface stormwater flow into and across the trail. A resultant runnel is now running down the center of the trail.
5. Zone 3: The existing Church Creek Trail has two existing access points to a gravel bar adjacent to Church Creek, that route through the critical area buffer of the creek.
6. Zone 5: The disc golf fairways inside the boundary of Wetland D show heavy disturbance of wetland soils and impact to wetland vegetation caused by downed logs, construction of pathways, and focused foot traffic.
7. Zone 5: Disc Golf fairways inside Wetland D downgrade the condition of the Disc Golf course for players.